

25 JUNE 1975

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CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATION

~~CASTRO~~

CASTRO, Fidel

ORGI MAFIA

U.S.-Cuba 'overtures' derailed

Probe for assassination plot by CIA blamed

By James Nelson Goodsell
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The Christian Science Monitor

Alleged Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) plots to assassinate Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro and the slaying of a Chicago crime-syndicate leader have derailed the movement toward reconciliation between Havana and Washington.

Although the setback is probably only temporary, there is little likelihood that there will be much action on reconciliation until the CIA issue is resolved. Currently, there are two congressional probes into the reported CIA-sponsored assassination attempts in the 1960s.

The slain Chicago gangster, Sam Giancana, figured in one of these alleged plots — reportedly first conceived in late 1960 and scheduled to be carried out in early 1961. It involved the hiring of a Cuban assassin to kill not only Dr. Castro, but his young brother Raul, and Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born close associate of Dr. Castro.

The plot was never carried out, but Washington sources say Giancana was the key figure in the plot.

His slaying over the weekend is shrouded in mystery. One theory is, however, that it was somehow connected with the CIA probes now under way in Washington. Mr. Giancana was expected to testify soon before the Senate committee investigating intelligence activities.

According to this theory, Mr. Giancana had become a liability to the underworld. While the Senate committee was looking into CIA connections, it is thought underworld figures in Chicago were concerned that Mr. Giancana might disclose syndicate secrets during the investigation.

The Senate committee, it is understood, has substantial evidence that a CIA plot did in fact exist and that it was spawned in the final months of the Eisenhower administration in late 1960 and was due to be carried out in the first months of the Kennedy administration.

But Senate investigators are looking carefully at the alleged Castro assassination plot and others developed in late 1960 against Gen. Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina of the Dominican Republic and Dr. Francois Duvalier of Haiti.

General Trujillo's assassination on May 30, 1961, is thought to have had a tie-in with the CIA. But in the case of General Trujillo, evidence now has come to light suggesting that several earlier CIA-sponsored plots against the Dominican leader were worked out in late 1960.

The rationale behind this alleged CIA plotting remains elusive. Dr. Castro, a Cuban nationalist, was adopting a strongly anti-United States policy, while General Trujillo, in office for 30 years, enjoyed much support in the United States.

At the same time, it is unclear whether Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy were informed of the plotting. Congressional figures say that both may well have been aware of what was going on without actually being involved in the planning.

While the current probes could tarnish a number of reputations in Washington, the immediate effect has been to push the movement toward Havana-Washington reconciliation aside — and there it is likely to remain until the investigations are finished.